

WASHINGTON, DC— Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) released the following statement today concerning a deal under which Dubai Ports World of the United Arab Emirates would manage six major U.S. seaports, including the Port of Baltimore:

“Nearly five years after the horrific attacks on this nation on September 11, 2001, it is clear that our enemies would like nothing more than to strike us again and that our seaports continue to be one of our major vulnerabilities. Democrats have repeatedly fought to upgrade and harden our nation’s port security, but our proposals and warnings have generally gone unheeded by the Bush Administration and Congressional Republicans.

“The fact that only 5 percent of the containers entering this country at our seaports are inspected is absolutely unacceptable, and commands our immediate attention.

“Given this continuing concern about security at America’s seaports, it is no wonder that a wide range of federal and state officials from both sides of the aisle are expressing their reservation about the specter of a Dubai company managing six major seaports. When a red flag like this goes up, our national security – and simple prudence – dictates that the American people and this Congress receive more information and that the matter be thoroughly reviewed. That is precisely what should happen now.

“The President should delay this sale until all security concerns have been addressed. Furthermore, this Congress and the Administration must give our seaports the resources that are required to address these continuing vulnerabilities. The sad fact is, our seaports are not as safe today as they should be.”

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